

CLAIMS

1. A method for the protection of plants from pathogenic fungi which comprises biocontrol by the use of a binucleate *Rhizoctonia* strain selected by molecular detection of the ITS ribosomal sequence.
2. A method according to claim 1 where the plant is selected from tomato, pepper, cucumber, lettuce, radish, parsley, and other herbs, bean, potato, sugar beet, carrot, garlic, onions, alfalfa, grass, wheat, rape, pine and other trees, as well as flowers.
3. A method according to claim 1, where the plant is a field crop, container-grown crop, water bed crop, vegetable or fruit crop, ornamental crop, nursery crop, garden crop, forest crop, or greenhouse crop.
4. A method according to claim 1 wherein the binucleate *Rhizoctonia* strain is selected using the ITS1 data.
5. A method according to claim 4, wherein the strain has an ITS1 sequence which is at least 90% homologous with one of SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:16, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:18, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:20, SEQ ID NO:21, SEQ ID NO:22, SEQ ID NO:23, SEQ ID NO:24, SEQ ID NO:25, SEQ ID NO:26, SEQ ID NO:27, or SEQ ID NO:28.
6. A method according to claim 5, wherein the strain is selected from *Rhizoctonia* sp. CECT 20320, *Rhizoctonia* sp. CECT 20321, *Rhizoctonia* sp. CECT 20322, *Rhizoctonia* sp.

CECT 20323. *Rhizoctonia* sp. CECT 20324. *Rhizoctonia* sp. ATCC 64643. and *Rhizoctonia* sp. CECT 2815.

7. A binucleate *Rhizoctonia* strain which has an ITS1 sequence which includes a fragment of at least 10 nucleic acid bases which is present in any of one of SEQ ID NO:15, SEQ ID NO:16, SEQ ID NO:17, SEQ ID NO:18, SEQ ID NO:19, SEQ ID NO:20, SEQ ID NO:21, SEQ ID NO:22, SEQ ID NO:23, SEQ ID NO:24, SEQ ID NO:25, SEQ ID NO:26, SEQ ID NO:27, or SEQ ID NO:28.

8. A concentrate for use in plant protection, containing viable material of a binucleate *Rhizoctonia* strain according to claim 7.

9. A method for the protection of plants from pathogenic fungi which comprises biocontrol by the use of a binucleate *Rhizoctonia* strain according to claim 7.

10. A primer for use in identifying binucleate *Rhizoctonia* strains of use in biocontrol, the primer being selected from SEQ ID NO: 7, SEQ ID NO: 8, SEQ ID NO: 9, SEQ ID NO: 10, SEQ ID NO: 11, SEQ ID NO: 12, SEQ ID NO: 13, and SEQ ID NO: 14.

Dependent
on
claim 7